

Update Process

Last Updated Monday, 24 April 2006

The 1996 TMP was the first update of the city's Transportation Master Plan. The original plan was adopted in 1989 and set the city on its current policy direction of managing the growth in vehicle traffic. While the 1989 TMP is best known for its objective of a 15 percent mode shift from single occupant vehicles (SOVs), it also called for a better understanding of travel in Boulder and the development of complete system plans for all modes. The 1996 TMP benefited from much improved data on how Boulder residents and employees travel, and identified the vision for the buildout of the automobile, transit, bicycle and pedestrian systems plans with a focus on improving all modes of travel on the ten multimodal corridors in the city.

Public Involvement in the Update Process Why Do This Update?

A lot has changed since the 1996 TMP. The following factors require a new update to meet the TMP goals:

- City funds are declining while additional funding is needed to implement the city's transportation programs and projects. (Sales taxes fund about 63 percent of city transportation funding).
- Growth has been much faster than anticipated in the 1996 TMP, with today's population and employment near the levels expected for 2020. Significant additional employment growth is also expected by 2025 with increased commuting into Boulder.
- RTD financial support for the Community Transit Network (CTN), which includes the HOP, SKIP, JUMP, BOUND, DASH, STAMPEDE, and DART high-frequency bus services has decreased, and we will be challenged to maintain the existing and planned bus service.
- The 1996 TMP was never fully funded, with expected revenues equaling about two-thirds of the plan's proposed funding needs.

Updating the TMP provides the opportunity to evaluate the results of our transportation policy since 1990, to identify areas that are not working or need improvement, and to refine the policy direction. This 2003 TMP Update is more realistic in relating levels of funding to transportation programs, such as improving intersections, building bike paths or providing buses on a frequent schedule.

How Does the 2003 TMP Improve on the 1996 TMP ?

The 2003 TMP builds on the policies and directions contained in the 1996 TMP (Key features of the 1996 TMP). Key concepts used in the update are:

- The 2003 TMP Update improvements will emphasize the four policy focus areas endorsed by the City Council: Multimodal Corridors, Regional Connections, Transportation Demand Management (TDM), and Funding.
- Major transportation funding improvements will be multimodal in character (including all modes - automobile, transit (bus), pedestrian, and bicycle) and implemented by prioritized multimodal corridor segment. (Investment Program)
- The street network is the primary infrastructure for all methods of travel and a key public space uniting the fabric of the community. It will be well-maintained, improved to maximize the efficiency of the existing system and managed to accommodate all forms of travel.

- The city will maintain and support the current Community Transit Network (CTN) and will incrementally expand the bus system as funding allows. The bus system will be supported by strategic investment in mobility options for older adults and those with disabilities, the targeted expansion of our pass programs, land use changes and pedestrian-oriented design, seamless connections to the other forms of travel, and high quality transit stops and stations.

- The community is building toward a complete bicycle system intended to ensure a safe and continuous system of bicycle paths and lanes. This system will provide continuous connections within the corridors to provide access to destinations within the community and to connect to the regional system.

- The Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program will build on the existing citywide efforts through programs developed for specific geographical areas by Transportation Management Organizations (TMOs). The level of expected TDM efforts will correspond to the level of expected development and redevelopment in the TMO area.

- Walking is the fundamental way to travel and normally connects travel by all other modes. The city will support pedestrian travel throughout the community and ensure adequate connections to public transit (buses).

What Is the Overall Approach for the 2003 TMP?

The implementation of the 1989 and 1996 TMPs has been very successful. The city has made significant improvements in launching the high-frequency Community Transit Network (CTN), dramatically increasing transit ridership, improving traffic flow through a number of intersection and roadway improvements, implementing major pedestrian and bicycle improvements, and minimizing traffic impacts even while experiencing significant growth. As part of the initial plan assessment phase of the TMP update, the direction provided by City Council was to "Continue What We Are Doing Well and Stay the Course". Council directed that the city continue to implement the TMP's system improvements and the policies that evolved through the 1989 and 1996 TMPs.

The plan assessment at the start of the 2003 update process identified four focus areas to meet Boulder's transportation challenges: how the city can be smarter about where and what is invested in (multimodal corridors); the need to create effective regional partnerships to address regional travel (regional travel); engaging the business community in addressing transportation solutions (TDM); and the need to develop a realistic funding plan (funding).